

Feb. 29, 1940

Princeton
~~Nelle Y. McLaughlin~~
Marlinton, W. Va.

-1-

Chapter 4 - Section 4 - Part a.

The Drinnons were the first settlers in the Edray Community. Thomas Drinnon, son of Walter Drinnon of Ireland, settled in Edray about 1760. The Drinnon cabin stood on the bank near the present graveyard. A spring under the bank has always been known as the Drinnon Spring. Not far from the cabin was a favorite camping place for Indians, and many stone relics have been found here. Other proof of the site of this cabin was an old apple orchard, and one tree remains to this day, over a hundred years old and known as the Drinnon apple. This field is known as the "Old Orchard Field". A part of it belongs to W. L. Price and the other part to A. R. Gay.

Early records tell us that Thomas Drinnon was a soldier with General Lewis in the Battle of Point Pleasant. When he returned home, he found his cabin in ruins. His wife had been killed by the Indians, and his son Charles carried into captivity. He was so broken up over his wife's death and the fate of his son that he returned to the army and marched beyond the Ohio River.

At the close of the war he returned to his mountain home, but there were no ties to hold him, and he resolved to journey to the west, and there among savage tribes search for his lost son. So with his rifle he pushed out into the wilderness. A year passed and there were no tidings of him. His friends believed that he had fallen a victim of savage cruelty. The fact was that he had journeyed far to the Northwest and found his lost son in possession of a trader

near Detroit. The homeward journey was begun, and at last both reached home and lived many years in what is now Pocahontas County.

Drinnon owned a large boundary of land, several thousand acres that extended from Indian Draft to Stony Creek. Drinnon's Ridge took its name from the old settler. The Drinnons left this section long ago and we know nothing of the descendants of these brave pioneers.

The settlers to follow the Drinnons were the Moores. About 1780 Robert Moore, Sr. moved to Edray from the Bridger place on Greenbrier River and settled on the Drinnon holdings. He and his boys opened up a fine farm and erected a two story brick dwelling---the only brick dwelling in the community. Robert Moore and his wife lived and died in the "brick mansion". He was born in 1763 and died 1858 aged ninety years. His grave was the first in the Edray Graveyard.

Robert Moore's farm was divided among his sons and one daughter. The names of the sons were: Isaac, James, William and Robert, Jr. Robert received the old homestead and lived there several years. In 1867 he sold the old home to J. W. Sharp.

Isaac Moore settled in the woods just opposite the present site of the Edray Church. His home was a hewed log house about sixteen by twenty feet, two stories high, shaved shingle roof, chinked and daubed walls, one door and one window in the first story. In 1911 a fine frame house was erected on the site of this old log house by S. B. Moore.

About 1861 Edray Community swarmed with soldiers on the march or in camp. Isaac Moore contracted camp fever and

as he convalesced he was seized by measles from which he died. He too was buried in the new graveyard by the side of his father.

Colonel John Baxter was an early settler in this community. He came here about 1800, and is the first member of his family about whom any definite information can be found. He was the first member of the Baxter family to settle in Pocahontas County. His home was at Sulphur Spring about three miles from the Drinnon cabin. He was the first Colonel of the 127th Regiment. In the organization of the county, he was a leader and he held a prominent place in the early history of the county. When the county was first formed, he administered the oaths of office to the other members of the first court in 1822. For many years he was a justice of the peace and a member of the Pocahontas County Court. He did much in framing business papers and frequently adjusted disputes out of court. His library was the largest and best in the county, containing over a hundred volumes.

About this time there became a popular demand for a Constitutional Convention and the Assembly in 1827-28 passed an act providing that vote be taken upon the question. This resulted in a large majority in favor of the convention and that body assembled in Richmond, October 5, 1829. This was the most remarkable body of men that had assembled in Virginia since 1788. There sat James Madison and James Monroe, ex-presidents of the United States and many others renowned for their wisdom and eloquence. The body was composed of ninety-six members and of the whole number eighteen were from the region now embraced in the limits of West Virginia.

Among these was John Baxter representing Pocahontas County. Other early settlers were the Darlows, Smiths, Duncans, and Duffields.

The Edray Post Office was established about 1850 and was the first post office in Pocahontas County. When looking for a name, Mrs. Eliza Moore, mother of the late George P. Moore, being a great student of the Bible suggested a Bible name. She said, "Call the post office Edrei, leave off the ei and add ay making Edray the name". (Numbers 21-33). The name Edrei means a fortress. In Joshua it is stated that Edrei is one of the fenced cities, and that may have suggested the name to Mrs. Moore, for at a very early date this little village was a fenced clearing. George P. Moore was appointed postmaster in 1856 by President Pierce. He was only sixteen years of age when he assumed this responsibility. He served as postmaster until 1885. William Scott was appointed postmaster under President Cleveland for some time, and then George P. Moore was appointed again and served until his death in 1922. His service made him the oldest postmaster in the United States. He served sixty-four yrs.

In the early days mills were of great importance and we find that the first mill was built by Robert Moore, Sr. at the head of Big Spring. This house was a hewed log building, two or more stories high, equipped with a twenty foot overshot water wheel and water trunk from the head of the spring. The inside equipment of the mill consisted of two sets of runners, both country made - one for grinding wheat and the other for grinding corn and snops.

The first saw mill of the community was built near the grist mill by Isaac Moore and got water from the same source. These mills were used for many years and this spot was the most important business center of the community.

The first store in Edray was owned and kept by William Allen at the place where Elmer Poage now lives. Isaac McNeel, Amos and Henry Barlow, and George P. Moore had stores at this same location.

The first schools in the community were held in the settlers homes. The teacher received free board in the homes of his pupils and would spend a week in the home of one pupil and then move on to the next. The first real school house was near Mrs. George Baxter's home. The house was a round log structure with clapboard roof held in place by press poles. The fire place took up most of one end of the room. It was made of rough stone and the chimney was made of slats and mud. For light greased paper was pasted over the cracks. Seats were made of split logs, holes bored and pins put in for legs. The term of school was three months and the teacher's salary one dollar a month for each pupil.

The first church in the Edray Community was built on Stony Creek and called Hamlin Chapel. It is a hewed log building, cracks chinked and daubed, shaved shingle roof, side galleries, and for benches long benches with slat backs. Some years ago the side galleries were taken out and the building ceiled. The benches were replaced with chairs. This church was built about 1835 and is still in use.